

## **Dagmar Reichardt**

### *Giovanni Verga: Verism as Resilience.*

Since the Renaissance times, Italy has played a crucial and complex intellectual role in the context of how to face facts produced by mankind and how to cope proactively with human reality. In this paper I intend to show how this tradition was picked up in the 19th century by Sicilian writer Giovanni Verga, after the Risorgimento and the unification of Italy, and how strong its impact still is today in terms of sustainability.

Giovanni Verga wrote his short story *Temptation!* (*Tentazione!*) 1883 in times of peace, bringing to perfection his Veristic style. It tells the story of three male characters that yield to the temptation of violence against a woman raping and killing her and as a consequence are put in jail for their crime. By applying Pierre Bourdieu's notion of the domination masculine (1998) and Gayatri C. Spivak's concept of subalternity, I'd like to show that Verga seems to be particularly interested in psychological aspects of male identity and in his aesthetical intentions as author.

Verga leaves one question open: how can we overcome the brutality of nature and/or the bestiality of mankind? Here, I will briefly mention the historical follow-up of Verism in terms of social resilience in 20th century Italy (Neorealism, post-colonialism, migration literature, new realism), and will conclude by pointing out how these currents relate to the idea of a sustainable society.